

Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Mabel Hubbard Bell, January 7, 1892, with transcript

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL TO MABEL (Hubbard) BELL Beinn Bhreagh, C. B. Jan. 7th, 1892. My darling Mabel:

At last the long expected letter has come. Yours from Gibraltar — and your first from Genoa arrived together — both (I observe by the postmark) via London.

Your notes my dear have relieved my mind very greatly. I have worried over you all — and specially have I worried over the children — and wondered how you were all getting along with out any maid or nurse. I hope to be soon with you now. Propose to leave Monday evening for Boston and Washington. Sail from New York the 23rd inst.

Made my final Beinn Bhreagh experiments with flying machine today. Arranged a straight pipe with four nozzles (abcd) as shown. Repaired small boiler — and attached it to vertical pipe forming axis above shown. When jets (a) and (b) were open — the others (c) and (d) being plugged — whole thing span round beautifully — 143 rotations per minute. Then we plugged up (ab) and opened (cd). Thing span round making 120 rotations per minute — but boiler pressure seemed to be greater than in former case although all the nozzles were of le size. The boiler pressure increased to such an extent that the top of the boiler was blown off and experiment ended.

Forgot to tell you that when our big boiler burst yesterday — curious thing happened.

Brass cover of boiler puckered up leaving two little holes (a) and (b) on either side of a rivet. Through these holes steam rushed with such force that the whole machine was shot over to 2 the other side of the laboratory. Mr. Ellis, who saw the whole thing says that the wings supported the machine — and that it flow like a bird with outstretched motionless

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wings — from one side of laboratory to other. I happened to be making some notes at the time — I heard the explosion — but being under cover at the time — failed to see effect.

We propose to plug the holes with solder — and take the machine up the hill near Mr. Martin's house. Place it over fire — and run to shelter and watch effect. When pressure becomes great — the solder in the holes will melt — and whole machine will be projected down hill — This will give it a chance to fly!

Been busy in evening — music and singing with George and Susie. George has made a wonderful house for Becky. Becky takes to it naturally. Intended as a warm sleeping place when we go away. After children's hour — business with Mr. McInnis and Mr. Martin till a late hour. Then talk with Mr. McCurdy till half-past two — about his map-type — and what he can do with them. Tired out and cannot write a decent letter. Big storm today — rain — warm. No frost on ground — not even snow on the mountain.

Your loving husband, Alec.